

Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand today and recognize Susan Cobb. She provides an invaluable service to North Texas each and every day, and I join the community in thanking her for her devotion to saving lives. It is a privilege to represent Susan, and all our fine nurses, in the 26th District of Texas.

CONGRATULATING HIGHLAND
COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON ITS
150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. NANCY E. BOYDA

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Highland Community College on 150 years of educating the good people of the state of Kansas. Chartered in 1858, Highland Community College was the first college in Kansas, and it has overcome many adversities to remain prosperous and respected to this day. Highland Community College offers a wonderful and necessary service to students who are trying to make more out of their lives.

Community colleges play an important and distinctive role in the American education system—they provide a world class education that is affordable and provides flexibility. Highland Community College facilitates programs for many non-traditional students all over the state of Kansas through its outreach program. It offers many night and weekend classes to those students whose lives can not be built around the typical student's schedule. A degree from Highland Community College will take any student far in life, and for some, it will be the push they needed to pursue additional degrees.

In Kansas, we believe that college should open doors, not close them, and that education should create opportunities, not debt. Sadly, instead of graduating with hope for their future, many of today's college students graduate with loan payments as far as the eye can see. In an increasingly competitive society, higher education is a necessity. Paying for and completing a higher education degree must be a realistic possibility for everyone. The great community colleges in Kansas, in particular Highland Community College, make that a reality for many students.

Highland Community College has made a commitment to providing a low-cost, high-value education. With their leadership, we'll move closer to the day when every Kansas student who wants to attend college can afford to do so and can receive a high quality education that fits their needs as an individual.

Highland Community College has served the State of Kansas and served it well. These words are a mere token of gratitude and cannot begin to repay the debt that we as Kansans owe members of the Highland community. Today, I congratulate Highland Community College on 150 years of success.

SUPPORTING SOLUTIONS TO THE
HOUSING CRISIS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support two important pieces of legislation that will both keep families in their homes, and increase the supply of affordable housing.

After years of lax regulatory oversight driven by the discredited ideology of the Bush administration and a rubber-stamp Republican Congress, our Nation is faced with a housing crisis. Sub-prime loans, once the darlings of Wall Street, are now adjusting upward and millions of families have lost their homes or are facing foreclosure. In just the first 3 months of 2008, over 113,000 foreclosure notices have gone out to families in California. President Bush has responded by providing a \$30 billion bailout to Bear-Stearns, a major cause of the mess in the first place. Today, the Democratic-led Congress is proposing a real solution that will assist real families, and all the President has offered is a veto threat.

I support both the Neighborhood Stabilization Act (H.R. 5818) and the Foreclosure Prevention Act (H.R. 3221). Together, they offer a comprehensive approach that will protect families, stabilize home prices, and expand affordable housing options around the Nation.

This legislation will allow homeowners trapped in untenable mortgages to refinance into FHA-backed mortgages. Lenders and borrowers must each take responsibility by lowering the outstanding principal, and demonstrating an ability to repay, respectively. Requiring borrowers to provide a portion of resale profits to the government further lessens taxpayer exposure. The legislation also provides loans and grants to states to acquire foreclosed properties and turn them into affordable units for both sale and rent. Finally, this bill includes tax provisions aimed at assisting first-time homebuyers, easing the burden of property tax bills, and expanding financing of low-income housing projects.

Just as important is what this legislation does not do. Unlike the bill passed by the Senate, these bills do not provide irresponsible and unnecessary tax breaks to homebuilders, nor do they include a tax incentive to purchase foreclosed properties that would likely increase the number of foreclosures.

I urge all my colleagues to support both bills before us today, and vote for policies that will stem the tide of foreclosures and provide real help to struggling families. If the Federal Government can provide a handout to Wall Street, we can certainly offer a hand up to families.

TRIBUTE TO PARTICIPANTS IN 2008
WE THE PEOPLE NATIONAL
FINALS

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, from May 3–5, 2008, more than 1,200 students from across the country visited Washington, DC, to take part in the national finals

of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, the most extensive educational program in the country developed to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

I am proud to announce that a group of outstanding students from St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Overland Park, Kansas, through their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, won the statewide competition, earning the chance to come to our Nation's capital and compete at the national level.

While in Washington, the students participated in a three-day academic competition that simulates a congressional hearing in which they "testify" before a panel of judges. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles as they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. It is important to note that independent studies of the We the People program indicate that alumni of this nationally-acclaimed program display a greater political tolerance and commitment to the principles and values of the Constitution and Bill of Rights than do students using traditional textbooks and approaches. With various reports and surveys that reveal the lack of civic knowledge and engagement, I am pleased to support such an outstanding program that continues to produce enlightened and responsible citizens.

Madam Speaker, the names of these outstanding students from St. Thomas Aquinas High School are:

Hillary Bourquin, Rosemarie Boyles, Annie Clark, Michelle Coombs, Alexander Davidson, Blair Donahue, Maria Dudley, Jillian Falbre, Lauren Hannifan, Lisa Hartung, Sarah Hermes, Veronica Holton, Erin Jolley, Emily Majerie, Arica Maurer, Kirsten Milliard, Theresa Nelson, Angela Nigro, Daniel Obermeier, Courtney Pigott, Rose Reynolds, Amanda Schnieders, Jonathan Shoulta, Emily Stone, David Sullivan, Bryan Thelen, Brittany Wilderson, and Jerry Wohletz.

I also wish to commend the teachers of the class, Tim Lillis and Amy Person, who are responsible for preparing these young constitutional experts for the statewide competition and national finals. Also worthy of special recognition is Lynn Stanley, the State coordinator, and Ken Thomas, the district coordinator, who are among those responsible for implementing the We the People program in my State.

I congratulate these students on their exceptional achievements at the We the People national finals.

TRIBUTE TO STATE SENATOR
MARY LOU RATH

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor a respected and dedicated legislator, a valued educator and community leader, and close confidante and dear friend who, for more than three decades, has dedicated her life and service to her neighbors in Western New York.